

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the subject application.

Listing of Claims:

What is claimed is:

1. 1. (Currently Amended) A polymeric hydrogel comprising a drug for the treatment of a posterior segment disease, wherein said hydrogel is comprised of a tetrapolymer of hydroxymethylmethacrylate, ethylene glycol, dimethylmethacrylate, and methacrylic acid, and said drug comprises a steroid and is capable of being passively released from the polymeric hydrogel while positioned on the eye in a therapeutically effective amount to ameliorate and/or stabilize neovascularization in the posterior segment.

2. (Original) The polymeric hydrogel of claim 1, wherein said hydrogel has a water content of between 10% and 90%.

3. (Original) The polymeric hydrogel of claim 2, wherein said hydrogel has a water content of between 37.5% and 75%.

3' (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The hydrogel of claim 1, wherein said drug is selected from the group consisting of prednisolone, prednisone and hydrocortisone.

5. (Original) The hydrogel of claim 1, wherein said hydrogel comprises a tetrapolymer of hydroxymethylmethacrylate, ethylene glycol, dimethylmethacrylate, and methacrylic acid.

6. (Original) The hydrogel of claim 1, wherein said drug is capable of being passively released into an ocular environment under ambient conditions.

7. (Original) The hydrogel of claim 1, wherein said drug is capable of being delivered to the posterior segment of the eye.

8. (Original) The hydrogel of claim 1, wherein said drug is capable of being delivered to the macula or retina.

9. (Original) The hydrogel of claim 1, wherein said drug is capable of being passively released into an ocular environment under existing conditions.

10. (Original) The hydrogel of claim 1, wherein said hydrogel is shaped as a contact lens.

11. (Original) The hydrogel of claim 10, wherein said hydrogel is capable of correcting vision.

12. (Original) The hydrogel of claim 11, wherein said hydrogel is capable of correcting vision in the range of +8.0 to -8.0 diopters.

13. (Original) The hydrogel of claim 10, wherein said hydrogel has a base curve between 8.0 and 9.0.

14. (Original) The hydrogel of claim 1, wherein said hydrogel comprises an ionic polymer.

15. (Withdrawn) The hydrogel of claim 1, wherein said hydrogel comprises a non-ionic polymer.

16. (Withdrawn) The hydrogel of claim 1, wherein said hydrogel comprises etafilcon A, vifilcon A, polymacon B, lidofilcon A, or vasurfilcon A.

17. (Withdrawn) A method of treating a posterior segment disease, said method comprising contacting an eye of a subject with the hydrogel of claim 1, wherein said hydrogel delivers a therapeutically effective amount of a drug to treat said posterior segment disease.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 17, wherein said posterior segment disease is selected from the group consisting of retinal detachment, neovascularization, diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, proliferative vitreoretinopathy, endophthalmitis, retinopathy of prematurity, posterior segment trauma, intraocular lens-related posterior segment complications, retinal vascular diseases, macular edema, intraocular tumors, retinal degeneration, vascular retinopathy, inflammatory diseases of the retina, AIDS-related retinitis, uveitis, and systemic diseases with retinal manifestations.

19. (Withdrawn) A method of fabricating a polymeric hydrogel, said method comprising the steps of contacting said polymeric hydrogel with a solution of a drug capable of treating a posterior segment disease, wherein said drug is passively transferred into said hydrogel.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Previously Presented) The hydrogel of claim 1 wherein the posterior segment disease is selected from the group consisting of diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, macular edema and vascular retinopathy.

22. (Currently Amended) A polymeric hydrogel comprising a drug for the treatment of a posterior segment disease, wherein said hydrogel is comprised of a tetrapolymer of hydroxymethylmethacrylate, ethylene glycol, dimethylmethacrylate, and methacrylic acid, and said drug comprises an angiogenesis inhibitor and is capable of being passively released from the polymeric hydrogel while positioned on the eye in a therapeutically effective amount to ameliorate and/or stabilize neovascularization in the posterior segment.

23. (Previously Presented) The polymeric hydrogel of claim 22 wherein the angiogenesis inhibitor comprises a VEGF antagonist.

24. (Previously Presented) The polymeric hydrogel of claim 22 wherein the angiogenesis inhibitor is selected from the group consisting of angiostatic steroids, angiostatin and thalidomide.

25. (Previously Presented) The hydrogel of claim 22 wherein the posterior segment disease is selected from the group consisting of diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, macular edema and vascular retinopathy.